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the Ely series takes a prominent position in this wonderful out-coming is, with us, a settled conviction.

[In our next issue we intend supplementing the above review with a table showing the different degrees of difficulty, form, and style, of each number of this series.]

Hymn for a Contralto Voice, and Chorus. F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy. Op. 96.

LITTLE less admirable than his two great Oratorios are the various hymns, psalms, and sacred cantatas, in which Mendelssohn has also evidenced his possession of a sublime musical genius, and a perfection of art training, that have now associated his name with those of the grandest of composers, Bach, Handel, and Beethoven. While some of these lesser (but still great) works of Mendelssohn, such as the *Lobgesang*, *Lauda Sion*, *Hear my Prayer*, the Forty-second and the Ninety-fifth Psalms, &c., are as well known as his *St. Paul* and *Elijah*, there are others quite as worthy of recognition and performance, which are yet but seldom heard; among them, especially the psalm now referred to. In Rietz's catalogue, it is dated 1843, Leipzig; and is stated to be "the elaboration of a work formerly published by Simrock, of Bonn, without any *opus* number, entitled, 'Three Sacred Songs for an Alto Voice, Chorus, and Organ.'" In its present shape it forms one of three pieces of religious music which the late Mr. Broadley commissioned Moscheles, Mendelssohn, and Spohr, to compose. That by the latter composer was performed at the last Norwich Festival, in 1866.

The opening movement of the hymn by Mendelssohn ("Lord, bow down Thine ear") is a lovely *andante* in six-eight, full of flowing, graceful melody, of exquisitely pathetic expression, yet never departing from the dignity of religious elevation. Here, as in his oratorios, we see how a great master can impart melodious beauty to sacred music without approaching, as inferior composers do, a secular and mundane style. The strains of this charming and sublime movement are alternated between the contralto solo and the responsive chorus, in a manner similar to the opening portion of the hymn, *Hear my Prayer*, by the same composer. The second movement is a chorale, given out first by the solo voice, and then in full choral harmony. The introduction of the form of the Lutheran church-tune is a marked feature of Bach's sacred music, which Mendelssohn has followed both in his oratorios and others of his works, with an effect worthy of his great model. The following movement, "Lord, we trust," also alternated between the solo voice and the chorus, is a *cantabile* melody, of pure and simple character, with a well-contrasted moving accompaniment. This is carried on to some length, closing with one of those impressive cadences peculiar to Mendelssohn. The hymn concludes with a choral fugue, on a clearly-defined, bold, diatonic theme, led off by the basses, and wrought with that continuous power and free command of counterpoint, without pedantry, which only such a master can display. An effective *point d'orgue*, and some good sequential and imitative passages, lead to another of those slow, concluding cadences which form such worthy climaxes to Mendelssohn's choral writing.

Transcriptions from "Elijah." By J. Baptiste Calkin. Nos. 1 to 6.

THESE Transcriptions are tenderly treated, as might be expected from a conscientious artist like Mr. Calkin; and, as pencil-sketches of a grand picture, they are worthy the attention of all Mendelssohn lovers. Here is, indeed, healthy "Sunday music," which may be enjoyed for its own sake any day in the week, a merit which cannot be claimed for a large portion of the "sacred" compositions so plentifully supplied to serious families. In the first number we have a very excellent arrangement of the tenor solo, "If, with all your hearts," and the fine chorus, "Yet doth the Lord see it not." We do not quite like the substitution of Elijah's opening recitative (transposed into C minor) for the recitative of Obadiah, before the tenor solo, especially as the latter ends with the dominant chord in

the key of the song, and the former with the dominant of the relative minor; but we presume that the object of Mr. Calkin was to announce emphatically the subject of the early portion of the Oratorio, as the words of the recitative are very judiciously given with the notes. The transcription of the chorus is remarkably good; the instrumental and choral effects being well preserved throughout. We quite agree with Mr. Calkin that the part in C major, beginning, "His mercies on thousands fall," is usually taken somewhat faster; but we see no reason for it, and regret that conductors should so blindly follow each other. We commend Mr. Calkin, however, for announcing in a foot-note that, although "*Più moto*" is marked, such direction is only "sanctioned by custom." No. 2 contains the *Andante* of the chorus, "Baal, we cry to thee," and the trio, "Lift thine eyes," the latter forming an effective little piece; but we question the policy of repeating the chorus afterwards. In No. 3, we have an arrangement of the soprano solo, "Hear ye, Israel," transposed into C minor and major, for greater facility in performance. Here, again, the words of the recitative, which connects the two movements, are given; a feature in these transcriptions which we should like to see extensively followed. No. 4 contains Elijah's air, "It is enough." In this the original key is preserved, and the prominent instrumental points are effectively woven in; the melody being distinctly marked throughout with connecting lines. This is one of the best arrangements of the series, and may be made very effective by a player who can sufficiently draw the voice part away from the accompaniment. In No. 5, we have the well-known alto solo, "O rest in the Lord," which has been very carefully laid out for the hands, and can be recommended, not only for its intrinsic beauty (respecting which no two opinions can exist), but for the excellent practice the arrangement affords to all who desire to cultivate the *legato* style of performance. The air is preceded by the recitative, commencing, "Arise, Elijah." Four pieces are contained in No. 6; Elijah's air, "Lord God of Abraham" (including the opening recitative), the tenor solo, "Then shall the righteous," and the quartetts "Cast thy burden," and "O come, ev'ry one that thirsteth." These are all exceedingly well suited for transcription; and the two solos, especially, are very faithful reflections of the originals. In conclusion, we may mention that amateurs will be pleased to find the fingering marked over every passage where any difficulty might arise. We cordially welcome these arrangements as pleasant reminiscences to those who have so often been moved by the mighty power of the original work. Such music cannot be too often before us; and these arrangements will introduce into the family circle a knowledge of the beauties of real sacred music, which will do much towards retarding the growth of vapid and worthless imitations.

Sonata quasi Fantasia, pour Piano et Violoncello.

Sonata, pour Piano et Violin.

Both composed by Joseph Street. (Leipzig, Breitkopf and Härtel.)

WE are glad that Mr. Street has sent us a Sonata, as well as a Sonata "quasi Fantasia," because experience has proved to us that the latter title is too often used by composers to cover their want of writing a solid and well-balanced Sonata. Of the two works before us, we infinitely prefer the Sonata (*not* "quasi Fantasia") for Piano and Violin, in the course of which much talent, if not genius, is shown. It has evidently been a labour of love with Mr. Street; for the work is dedicated to Molique, who was, it appears, his instructor in composition; and from whom, no doubt, he gleaned much valuable information respecting the instrument he has written for. The first movement is conceived in the true spirit of Sonata writing; and the passages never degenerate either into common-place or mere executive display. The instruments are skilfully combined, and the themes are bold and well-marked. The *Adagio*, although scarcely, perhaps, as melodious as we could wish, is effective throughout; and the *Finale* is remarkable for vigour and contrast of subject.